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ABSTRACT

The dissertation summarized here assessed the priority of selected educational goals as perceived by certain representative groups in a school district and determined the degree to which the respective groups' expectations were being met. The six groups studied were students, teachers, lay citizens, administrators, citizen advisory committee members, and board of education members. The data were subjected to several statistical tests. Among the findings were that sufficient disagreement between and within groups existed to conclude that the educational needs of students should be identified in a more objective manner: that the lack of agreement between groups demonstrates better communication is needed: that the data provides a profile of the educational philosophy of each group: and that because of the disagreement, the study provided little definite direction for educational decision-making. Conclusions, recommendations, and implications of the study are reported. (Author/IRT)

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THE RANKING AND PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS AS DETERMINED BY GROUPS WITHIN A HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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FOREWORD

Each year since January, 1971, the Arizona State University College of Education's Bureau of Educational Research and Services collaborates with Arizona School Administrator's Inc., to identify, from among the dissertations produced in the Department of Educational Administration and Supervision, those topics which would be of greatest current interest to school administrators in Arizona.

Dissertations identified are then summarized in Research Reports on Educational Administration and distributed gratis to school administrators and Educational Administration faculty. The current issue is the twenty-third in the series.

The investigation by Dr. William Cole concerned itself with assessing the priority order of selected educational goals as perceived by certain representative groups within the Glendale Union High School District.

Other dissertations which have been summarized and published in the past are listed on the inside back cover. All dissertations from which the summaries are derived are available on interlibrary loan and may be obtained by any library upon application to the Director of Libraries, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona 85281. All dissertations are also available on microfilm from University Microfilm, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan.

M.D.
G.E.B.

THE RANKING AND PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS AS DETERMINED BY GROUPS WITHIN A HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

The direction of school district programs has been motivated by various forces in the past. Today the needs of school children is being vocally reflected by the populations that make up the school districts of this country. The needs, however, are not always delineated by obvious facts. The job of the school district is to isolate the needs in a form that can be identified, not only by the professional educator, but by the lay public as well. Investigation is necessary to define the needs of the students in light of the goals and philosophy of the school district. The total community has specific needs that must be isolated from the loud comments made by a small minority of the community.

To determine the direction of a school's program mandates that the goals and objectives of the organization be defined in such a form that they may be effectively communicated to the various public segments being served. Times have changed the perceptions of groups within school districts that make an ongoing assessment necessary.

An analysis of a high school district's populations was sought by asking selected groups to rank educational goals. The information in itself is valuable to understand how certain representative groups view education at the present time. The research is also pertinent because the statistical methodology may be applied to educational goals that now exist in any school district. Relevancy of a school program should be analyzed by proper research procedures and educational decisions made with the help of empirical data.

THE PROBLEM

The problem addressed in this study was two-fold. First, the priority of selected educational goals as perceived by certain representative groups of a school district was assessed. Second, there was a determination of the degree to which the respective groups' expectations for the goals were being met.

The educational goals used in this study were developed by the Northern California Program Development Center of Chico, California, and are now being used for educational decision making by the Phi Delta Kappa Professional Educational Fraternity.

PROCEDURE

Subjects for the six groups used in the study were taken entirely from the Glendale Union High School District, Glendale, Arizona. Random selection was observed for the students, teachers, and lay citizens. The administrators, citizens advisory committee and school board members were selected as intact groups.

The goals and goal indicators that were administered were accepted by the board of education. There was no attempt to use local groups to formulate the goals or goal statements. Neither were they altered to give them more local validity. The goals and level of performance scales were developed by the program development center mentioned above. The goal statements were extracted from a 1969 study by the California School Boards Association.

The method used in collecting the data was similar for all groups except the lay citizens group. This group was contacted by mail with specific information and procedures, similar to the information given to the other subgroups, and they reacted to the inquiry on their own. The other groups were brought together, each on a separate occasion, for the purpose of completing the necessary task.

Data obtained from the ranking and scoring procedures were analyzed by the Friedman test for two-way analysis of variance within the groups, F-test, t-test, Kruskal-Wallis H-test and Spearman's rank correlation to find relationships between the six groups. The 0.05 level of significance was accepted as significant for this study.

FINDINGS

Through the treatment of the data, the following findings were developed:

1. Mean goal ranking showed clustering of goals at the top and bottom of the 1-18 scale for each group sampled.

2. The Friedman test revealed there was no agreement within the groups in the ranking of educational goals.

3. There was agreement within and between groups as to how the district was meeting five of the eighteen goals. This inference was made by the application of the t-test and the F-test.

4. Agreement between the groups was not achieved when the Kruskal-Wallis H-test was applied to the ranking of the educational goals.

5. The relationship between groups was displayed for certain goals by the results of the F-ratio. The level of performance scale was in agreement for five of the eighteen goals.

6. The Spearman Rank Correlation showed a relationship between the rank of the goal and the score rank of the levels of performance for only one goal statement.

7. Students provided the largest variance of the groups sampled.

8. The affective domain showed top priority ranking by teachers, administrators and school board members in the analysis of goals by educational domains. The cognitive domain received a top ranking by students, lay citizens and the citizens advisory committee.

9. Differences that were found to exist in all the tests applied provides little definite direction for educational decision making. However, the perceived needs of the educational program can be viewed with evidence of marked differences in the population of the district.

CONCLUSIONS

Considering these findings the following conclusions were made:

1. The group showed mean ranking agreement of goals with high and low order. However, the goals in the middle order varied greatly between respondents. It may be concluded that the goals with high or

low priority are of the greatest concern to a respondent, or the goals on the list of eighteen are too difficult to rank.

2. It was concluded that lack of agreement between groups demands better communication. This communication between groups within the school district will be greatly enhanced by the common point of reference provided by the goals of education used in this study.

3. There was sufficient disagreement between and within the groups to conclude that the educational needs of students should be identified in a more objective manner.

4. The direction of the educational program of the school district should not be changed based on this study.

5. The lack of response by the lay citizen group to the mail-out survey, suggests the need for other means of gathering data for educational research.

6. Sampling by the use of city and telephone directories, in a highly mobile community like Glendale, does not provide adequate numbers of subjects due to the fact many sampled subjects have moved and others have moved since the printing of the directories, or the subjects did not have sufficient identification with the district to cause them to reply.

7. High ranking of certain educational goals provides a profile of the educational philosophy of that group. Therefore, it was concluded that knowledge and background skills for the students of the school district provide the center of the educational philosophy of the non-certified respondents in this study. Conversely, the professionally trained educators appear to center their philosophy on the attitude in the students.

8. The Board of Education indicated strong agreement that educational goals were being met by the students of the school district. The agreement reflects satisfaction with the educational direction of the school district.

9. It also appears that the priority of educational goals vary between individuals. It can be concluded that the differences vary between groups sampled.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made as a result of the study:

1. That the Phi Delta Kappa goals be used in another school district with educators and non-educators familiar and unfamiliar with the goal statements.

2. That the Phi Delta Kappa goals be translated into measurable performance objectives and the students of the Glendale Union High School District be evaluated by these objectives to determine their true educational deficiencies and successes.

3. That a study be formulated to assess the desire of the community to become involved in educational decision making.

4. That a different sampling procedure, such as cluster sampling, be used with the same school district populations.

5. That school districts consider the various groups' mean goal priority when curriculum decisions are made.

6. That Phi Delta Kappa revise their professional involvement program to provide for more compatibility between the ranking of the goals and the level of performance scales.

7. That Phi Delta Kappa goals be used as the basis for communication, and community in-service be provided to bring about better understanding of educational direction.

IMPLICATIONS

The evidence presented in this report supports the following implications for the practicing administrator:

An increasing number of communities are requesting relevancy in the school program being offered by their local districts. There is an implication from this study that the school program should be properly analyzed and educational decisions made upon the empirical data.

School districts should define the needs of the students in light of the goals and philosophy of the district, based upon the analyzation of the data. The implication from this study is that the educational philosophy of the professional educators and the non-certified

respondents differ. These differences must be considered not only in assessing the student needs but also in developing the district goals and philosophy.

The last implication is that there is a great need for improved communication between all concerned groups within a school district about the educational programs and the directions taken. These groups include staff, students, parents, and community groups. It is suggested that a common point of reference provided by the educational goals can greatly enhance this communication process.

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